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ABSTRACT

Addressing the need for developmental or remedial reading and writing courses at the college level, this paper provides a broad perspective on the strengthening of such programs for students deficient in these skills. The paper first enumerates various reasons for developing reading-writing courses for pre-college students, then provides evidence that the pedagogical concept of teaching reading and writing together has been well documented by researchers. The paper next discusses diverse strategies and models for teaching reading and writing concurrently and touches on the need for further research in the area. The paper concludes with an annotated bibliography of works already cited and of other publications that refer to the reading-writing connection. Listed primarily by author, the 37 entries include studies, instructional models, reviews, and opinion articles. (NKA)

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THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION:

AN OVERVIEW AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Patricia A. Malinowski

Over the past several years, educators at the college level have been faced with an ever increasing number of students who are deficient in the areas of reading and writing - the areas which provide the foundation for success in college. Contributing to this is the growing number of returning adult students and students who leave high school with minimal skills in reading and writing. Faced with this problem, colleges have initiated a variety of courses - mostly through English and developmental study departments - to remediate this need and to provide students with necessary skills to meet the requirements of a college career.

THE NEED

Two recent government reports, A Nation at Risk, and What Works, have recognized the need for improving reading and writing at all educational levels and have offered frightening statistics which affirm the idea that colleges must be ready to deal with basic skill deficient students. At the college level, meeting this need is addressed in what are often designated as "pre-college,"

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remedial or developmental courses which can be credit bearing or not. The government reports regarding deficient reading and writing skills are both explicit and implicit with strong recommendations for change.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education published its report, A Nation at Risk, in 1983 with some very surprising and frightening findings. For example,

> Some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest tests of everyday reading, writing and comprehension.
> About 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate.
> Many 17-year-olds do not possess the "higher order" intellectual skills we should expect of them. Nearly 40 percent cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay; and only one-third can solved a mathematics problem requiring several steps. (8-9)

The findings of this report have many implications for educators on all levels. But for the most part, these above mentioned adults and 17-year-olds are the students seen in college learning centers and in developmental courses who are in need of remediation in the basic skills of reading, writing and thinking.

The second report, What Works, also cites significant

statistics which should be seen as a reflection of the student body now on college campuses. This report notes:

> Forty percent of 13-year-olds and 16 percent of 17-year-olds attending high school have not acquired intermediate reading skills. They are unable to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, or make generalizations about literature, science, and social studies materials. Inability to perform these tasks raises the question of how well these students can read the range of academic material they are likely to encounter in school.
>
> Just 5 percent of students at age 17 have advanced reading skills and strategies that enable them to synthesize and restructure ideas presented in specialized or complicated texts used by professional and technical workers. (20)

These government reports reiterate an idea repeatedly found in current educational literature that all is not right in education and approaches in the basic areas must be reviewed.

Besides these government reports, there are several other reasons that also must be taken into account in this overview which addresses the need for teaching reading-writing skills at the college level. The first is that many of the students who are presently entering colleges have what can be considered a very limited world knowledge or life experience. They have read little, find no need to do so and have come to associate reading as a task that needs to be

accomplished only because "the teacher says so." Attitudes toward writing are the same. In speaking to recent high school graduates, one will often find that in their senior year they have done little, if any, reading or writing. Why this void at this time when these young adults will soon be asked to utilize these skills either in the work force or as they move on to further educational endeavors?

Another reason for the continued development of good reading-writing skills is the ever-changing demands of our highly technical and industrialized world. A person must now be able to read, comprehend, analyze and respond quickly. These skills are required in most "high tech" occupations which presently are enticing monetarily to the college student.

A final reason for developing reading-writing courses pertains to education at the community college level. This is the "open admissions policy" which is often characteristic of the community college. The community college is a unique institution in that any student who can qualify for financial aid or afford to pay the tuition is allowed admission. This means that, in some cases, there are students who have not completed high school, students who are trying to achieve their GED (High School Equivalency Diploma) while attending college courses, students who have returned to education after years in the work force or after raising a family, students who have been accepted by no other college and, sadly, students who, in reality, have no where else to go and

the community college serves as a socialization institution. Some of these students need work on their basic skills which are weak or, perhaps, have not been utilized in several years. One of the best ways of attempting to attack this deficiency is through a reading-writing course.

READING AND WRITING TOGETHER

The idea of reading and writing being taught together is not new; however, it is not often taught together on the college campus because students are "assumed" to already have mastered these two basic skills. But college educators are finding this to be untrue and current research shows that there is a basis for dealing with these skills concurrently.

In one of the first studies to draw a correlation between reading and writing on the college freshman level, Grobe and Grobe (1977) found that "Exposure alone to printed material facilitates the unconscious learning of writing skills" and that knowledge "of the organization of reading material ... produces more effective writing" (54). The authors of this study go on to recommend that more research be conducted in this area - their study being only an initial step.

Other researchers in this area (Salvatori, Lederman) have formulated similar theories. An overall observation is that better readers read more and unconsciously learn the skills needed to write. Once a person can become familiar with patterns common to both reading and writing (sequencing,

cause and effect, comparison/contrast and so on), a modelling effect will take place and both reading and writing will improve.

Another advantage to the paired reading-writing course is that it presents students who are all too often void of ideas possible writing topics. One of the ideas which recurs in reading-writing research is that this void can be decreased by increasing the students' background knowledge (schema theory) and allowing students to move away from their often egocentric world (Sbaratta, Petersen and Burkland, Petrosky, Collins). The reading-writing connection allows students to respond to reading often by reflecting (critical thinking) on their feelings and experiences and transcribing these thoughts. These thoughts receive added importance as the student recognizes and develops the skills of a writer.

Another point to be considered is the content. Reading does cover the range of human emotions. Allowing students to read and respond in writing often allows them to feel that their emotions are all part of what is often recognized as the universal human experience (Lederman). Students are often seen to use readings in personal and original ways to respond when asked to write for their academic courses (Bazerman). A similar idea suggests that for students to develop as readers and writers they must have "cultural literacy" to have linguistic literacy (Hirsh).

Teaching reading and writing together can also result in

a modelling or the transferring effect. Students are novice writers. They often have a good command of oral language, but when asked to write "something gets lost in the translation." By seeing good writing, both content and syntax, the student will unconsciously begin to model and internalize the skills (Collins, Grobe and Grobe).

In addition, other researchers have found that the mental processes involved in reading and writing are parallel Carpenter and Trippensee point out

> Both reading and writing require similar encoding and decoding skills. To write, students must encode sensory data and vague thoughts that communicate with an audience. While writing, they must decode their own messages to measure how adequately the code or words represent the data input. Reading involves the same process. Students use their phonetic skills, vocabulary, and experiences to decode the written words, to get at the message. Simultaneously, they are encoding and "rewriting passages" by rephrasing sentences, summarizing paragraphs and making inferences. (197)

Petersen also believes that the student "... has engaged in two complimentary mental processes - reading and responding to reading in writing" (460).

With the above research in mind, the case for concurrent reading-writing courses is strong.

READING-WRITING MODELS

Designs for models of what works and what has not are varied. All course development will depend upon the instructor's individual assessment of the students and their capabilities; however, several models for reading-writing courses will be described.

In one such course, Sbaratta suggests the use of a personal journal for students. The students write on self-selected topics, are asked to share their writing (idea of reading and worth of written material is reinforced) and, finally, publish their work. This model suggests that student curiosity will be aroused and, therefore, interest will be maintained to continue both reading and writing.

Another strategy suggested by Carpenter and Trippensee, encourages students to create a collage from their reading materials. The students are then asked to write about their collage, share their writing and be prepared for discussion and suggestions for additions and revisions from fellow students. Again, this allows for the active combination of reading and writing and reinforces the idea that the students' writing is important.

A different approach is suggested by Glorie. The objective is to teach students to write a clear, step-by-step process essay which is important in technical and analytical writing. She suggests the use of label directions, owners' manuals and so on. The idea is practical, has relevancy for the student and combines the reading-writing aspect.

Still another approach suggests that students respond to literature. Lederman believes that this model is especially appropriate for the community college. The genre to be used should be short, but entire works which are relevant and multicultural. Students follow the pattern of reading, reacting, re-reading, writing and revising. Again, the emphasis is placed upon reading and transferring this knowledge to writing.

Another model is suggested by Petersen and Burkland. They base their idea on the development and parallel growth of reading-writing skills. The idea behind this model is to begin with personal reading and writing (for example, personal narratives) and expand into the research area. This is done gradually over a semester, but throughout the process the connection of reading and writing is stressed with continual emphasis upon using what has been read as a model for writing.

Another a parallel reading-writing model based upon Jakobsen's "Schema of Communication" has been developed by Williams. She suggests that both reader and writer follow a set pattern. This pattern deals with context, message, audience, contact and code. One of the important aspects of this model is the emphasis placed upon the strong similarities between reading and writing. Through constant use of this pattern, students will hopefully see the connection between the two areas and transfer will be made.

One of the recent models which has been developed offers

the connection between reading, writing and thinking. Collins offers this model at an appropriate time as much has recently been written about the interrelationship of these three areas. Collins model is three tiered. The first is Pre/Reading and Writing or Preparation. The second is Reading/Writing or Discernment. The third step is Re-Reading/Writing or Evaluation. The model very closely ties together reading-thinking-writing and also adds study skills. The model seeks to draw parallel skills growth between the skills of reading and writing. The author suggests that as the student comes to recognize and apply these similarities both reading and writing will improve as well as the ability to formulate ideas. This model presents a pattern which can be modelled and used in the reading-writing classroom.

RESULTS

At this time, research as to the long range effects of a reading-writing course is inconclusive. The statistics which have been reported by researchers are, for the most part, on small groups over a one semester period. Most researchers have strongly reiterated the need for longitudinal studies.

Researchers have come to a recurring conclusion. This is that reading and writing skills share similar mental processes and the development of one will lend to the development of the other. From this follows the idea that good readers will make good writers as the background and mechanical (syntax and grammar) knowledge are modelled and

transferred. An added benefit is that students will improve basic reading and writing skills while learning to appreciate and respond to good literature.

The development of paired reading and writing courses meets the needs of new college students who are deficient in the basic skills needed to complete a successful college career. A primary benefit is that a reading-writing course can develop an important and certainly very needed life skill.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following is an annotated bibliography of works referred to in this paper as well as other publications which refer to the reading-writing connection. Articles used are recent in that most are from publications of the past six years and are directed toward college teaching. Some articles are found in ERIC from the past four years.

A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. The National Commission on Excellence in Education, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1983.
This paper reports on the quality of teaching and learning in schools in the U.S., compares the U.S. educational system to that of other countries, identifies problems and offers recommendations for change.

Bazerman, Charles. "A Relationship between Reading and Writing: The Conversational Model." College English. February, 1980: 656-661.
The author suggests a five step model (which he designates as a conversational model) for teaching reading and writing. The writer progresses from accurate reaction to literature to final in depth interpretation.

Carpenter, Carol and James Trippensee. "Reading and Writing Main Ideas: A Model and A Method." Teaching English in the Two Year College. Spring, 1981: 197-200.
The authors discuss reading and writing as being similar skills - encoding and decoding. They suggest improving both through the use of a student created collage. A student designs the collage, writes about it, shares his ideas and reads about the ideas of others.

Collins, Carmen. "Interactive Literacy: The Connection between Reading and Writing and the Computer." Collegiate Microcomputer. November, 1985: 333-338.
The article discusses the author's use of "interactive literacy." She suggests the use of a well developed and logical model which interrelates the skills of reading, thinking and writing.

-----. Read, Reflect, Write. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1984.
The author describes her model of reading-thinking-writing and also adds study skills to the course.

-----. "Making 2 of the 3R's Pay Off." New York Times. 4 April 1984, New Jersey Section, Sec. 11: 32.
This article reaffirms the need for teaching reading-writing as a combined course on the college campus. The author's own study at Rutgers University showed improvement in both skills and favorable student response.

Crews, Frederick. "Comparing Our Differences." Composition and Literature. Winifred Bryan Horner, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
The author discusses the idea that reading and writing classes together can facilitate open class discussion,

response to literature and stimulus for writing.

Corbett, Edward P.J. "Literature and Composition: Allies or Rivals in the Classroom?" Composition and Literature. Winifred Bryan Horner, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
The author discusses the volatile topic of literature in writing classes. His final evaluation is that differences between instructor's in the two areas must be put aside for the benefit of the student who will be able to grow from the combination of the two disciplines.

Daigon, Arthur. "From Reading to Writing." Reading through Content. Richard T. Vacca and Judith A. Meagher, ed. Storrs, Conn.: Reading-Study Center, 1979.
The author suggests that resistance to writing can be reduced by: writing to an audience other than the teacher, assuming a persona and use of "real forms," (eg.letters, diaries and so on). Using these three methods also results in better mechanics and grammar as the writer investigates usage appropriate for each.

Duke, Charles R. ed. Writing Exercises from Exercise Exchange. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1984.
Section IV (Writing and Reading) of this text is especially pertinent for reading-writing courses. The text contains classroom exercises for combining writing and reading. These are submitted by teachers.

Early, Margeret. Reading to Learn in Grades 5 to 12. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovannovich,1984.
A review of the section on "Learning About Ourselves as Learners" offers excellent suggestions on how to help students became aware of their own learning skills and suggestions for developing these areas. Ideas can be applied to all content areas.

Falk, Julia S. "Language Acquisition and the Teaching and Learning of Writing." College English. December, 1979: 436-447.
The author discusses her model which views writing as a form of language acquisition just like learning to speak. She believes that not until a person can comprehend reading can they comprehend writing. Language and writing must be learned holistically and must be meaningful and relevant.

Ferris, Judith Ann and Gerry Snyder. "Writing as an Influence on Reading." Journal of Reading. May, 1986: 751-756.
A review of the studies regarding reading-writing that have been conducted show that results are inconclusive.

For the most part writing skills have improved, but there has been a negligible change in reading ability. The authors call for more research in the area.

Fishel, Carol T. "Reading in the Content Area of English." Reading in the Content Areas: Research for Teachers. Mary M. Dupuis, ed. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1984.
Readiness, guidance and extending comprehension should be the characteristics of teaching reading within the content area of English. It is especially important to use advance organizers, concept development and good questioning strategies. This article also includes an annotated bibliography on reading.

Fitzgerald, Sallyanne H. "The Effect of a Reading/Study Skills Class on Students' Ability to Pass a Basic Writing Class." Research and Teaching in Developmental Education. April, 1986: 13-20.
The author reports on a study she conducted involving 154 students in a reading/study skills class and their ability to pass basic writing. Results of the study were inconclusive.

Flood, James, Diane Lapp and Nancy Farnan. "A Reading-Writing Procedure that Teaches Expository Paragraph Structure." The Reading Teacher. February, 1986: 556-562.
The authors discuss their model for teaching reading-writing in the upper elementary grades. They suggest a format of selecting a topic, reading sources, plotting the paragraph and writing/revising. Paragraphs then receive a peer evaluation for main idea and supporting details.

Glorie, Josephine. "How to Read and Write a Pumpkin Owner's Manual." English Journal. September, 1983: 79-81.
The author discusses the use reading directions of such items as labels and manuals as a way of introducing process and analysis writing to students. She feels that the modelling of such will encourage students to adopt proper sequencing in technical writing.

Griffin, C. William, ed. Teaching Writing in All Disciplines. Washington: Jossey-Bass Inc, 1982.
A collection of what has been done in teaching writing across content areas. Ideas offered by various authors are pertinent and relevant for the various content areas.

Grinols, Anne Bradstreet. "The Search for Suitable Materials for a College Reading Course: A Surprising Solution." Research and Teaching in Developmental Education. Vol. 1, No. 2, 1985: 44-48.

The author suggests the use of articles from faculty members for reading. Using this idea presents different examples of content area writing and is easily geared to the reading level of the students. It also allows for modelling.

Grobe, Shelley F. and Cary H. Grobe. "Reading Skills as a Correlate of Writing Ability in College Freshmen." Reading World. October, 1977: 50-54.
This is one of the first studies which sought to prove a relationship between reading and writing skills on the freshman college level.

Hirsh, E.D. Jr. " Reading, Writing and Cultural Literacy." Composition and Literature. Winifred Bryan Horner, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
The author states his belief that students must have cultural literacy (attained through reading and increasing background knowledge) to have linguistic literacy (writing ability). This is accomplished by teaching reading and writing together.

Horning, Alice S. "The Connection of Writing to Reading: A Gloss on the Gospel of Mina Shaughnessy." College English. November, 1978: 264-268.
This article is a review of Mina Shaughnessy's ideas of the relationship between reading-writing. She reaffirms ideas such as to write one must be able to read, reading and writing errors are similar and logical, modelling, basic writing students read little and that proofreading is different from other types of reading and must be taught separately.

Lederman, Marie Jean. "Literature and Composition in the Two-Year College: Love Affair or One Night Stand?" Teaching English in the Two Year College. February, 1985: 9-13.
The author points out the divergence in ideas regarding reading-writing within the instructional area. She believes it is important that the two be held closely together and suggests that both reading and writing be short, relevant and mulitcultural. She points out that this approach is especially important in the community college.

Meagher, Judith A. "Learning to Write: Some Considerations." Language Centered Reading Instruction. Judith A. Meagher and William D. Page, ed. Storrs, Conn.: Reading-Language Arts Center, 1980.
The author points out that instructors must pay attention to factors such as reason for writing, time, confidence of writer, audience and instructional strategies to make writing an exciting and interesting process for students.

Moss, Andrew. "Readers for Basic Writing Courses: A Selective Survey." Teaching English in the Two Year College. May 1985: 164-169.
This article is a review of textbooks which would be appropriate for writing courses. The author designates three possible categories: the reader-rhetoric, the basic writing course and a freshman composition course

Petersen, Bruce T. "Writing about Responses: A Unified Model of Reading, Interpretation and Composition." College English. September, 1982: 459-468.
The author discusses the parallel mental processes of reading and writing. He then presents a three phase semester plan which begins with "raw response," draws on the student's schema and develops writing and reading by doing both over and over. He believes that writers are readers who can accurately articulate their response to reading clearly and correctly through writing.

Petersen, Bruce T. and Jill N. Burkland. "Investigative Reading and Writing: Responding to Reading with Research." College Composition and Communication. May, 1986: 236-240.
In this article, the authors discuss their method used at Michigan Technological University of making research a conscious part of their reading-writing program. It is a graduated method which uses examples of literature to show students how to proceed from personal writing to public writing to research. The emphasis within the program is reading and then applying.

Petrosky, Anthony R. "From Story to Essay: Reading and Writing." College Composition and Communication. February, 1982: 19-36.
This article is a review of using a seminar approach to teaching a reading-writing course. It is based upon accessing the students' schema and applying it to reading and writing.

Protheroe, Donald W., ed. Reading-Writing Connections. Storrs, Conn.: Reading-Language Arts Center, 1984.
A collection of essays on the reading-writing connection. Articles deal with different aspects from teaching reading-writing together to the development of study skills in the classroom.

Salvatori, Mariolina. "Reading and Writing a Text: Correlations between Reading and Writing Patterns." College English. November, 1983: 657-666.
The author emphasizes the idea that a student will experience parallel growth in reading and writing. An added idea is that a student will develop maturity in both as he learns to identify (read) and manipulate

(write) "syntactic structures."

Sbaratta, Philip. "Reading Meets Writing in Freshman English." Teaching English in the Two Year College. Winter, 1982: 131-133.
The author considers the problems of novice writers - lack of background knowledge, lack of syntactic skill and lack of style. He then offers reading as a viable solution in the form of a "style journal" in which the student selects his own topics, vocabulary and so on. Writing is shared with the rest of the class.

Silvers, Penny. "Process Writing and the Reading Connection." The Reading Teacher. March, 1986: 684-688.
The author discusses her model of students writing, expressing, sharing and publishing their own "books" for class discussion.

U.S. Department of Education. Becoming a Nation of Readers. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1984.
This excellent study reviews what some most notable authorities in the field of reading believe should be done in our nation's schools. The recommendations are well founded.

U.S. Department of Education. What Works. Washington: GPO, 1986.
This recent report shows what has been working in schools. It also offers suggestions for implementation of its recommendations.

Weiss, M. Jerry. "Writers and readers: The literary Connection." The Reading Teacher. April, 1986: 758-763.
The author reinforces the idea that readers responding to writing is important. Background shapes response to reading and is instrumental in writing. It is important for the instructor to capitalize upon this aspect and incorporate both in reading-writing classes.

Williams, Harriet. "Jakobsen's Schema of Communication in the Literature Class: Teaching Critical Reading and Writing Skills." Teaching English in the Two Year College. February 1985: 57-63.
The author describes her adaptation of Jakobsen's scheme for reading (Context, message, addresser, contact, code) to a reading-writing class with parallel use of the schema for both areas. She has students quickly immersed in reading and writing on three levels - literal, interpretive and applied.

Yoos, George E. "An Identity of Roles in Writing and Reading." College Composition and Communication.

October, 1979: 245-250.
The author develops his hypothesis that reading and writing are related in a much deeper manner than is usually recognized. He groups their similarities into four categories which he labels as: objective-expressive, face adjustment, audience and logic. Both areas work in these four categories and development of skills in one discipline will lead to development of skills in the other.